

CHAPTER VII

AGE AND NATURAL INCREASE

(1) AGE

THE age constitution, *i.e.* the percentage formed by the various age-groups among a population, is a resultant of the numbers born in successive years and their rates of survival. Where the birth-rate is high, the earliest age-groups are more strongly represented than where it is low. Where the death-rate is low, more people reach a high age. But in turn the age-distribution of a population greatly influences its birth- and death-rates. The smaller the number of men between 20 and 55, and of women between 15 and 45, *i.e.* of a reproductive age, the less is the birth-rate; and the greater the percentage of the people of an advanced age, the higher the death-rate,

With the Jews of Western and Central Europe, in view of the strong decline of their birth-rate and their low death-rate, the lower age-groups are comparatively small and the high ones very large—the opposite of what their relative proportions were in previous times.

Table XI shows that in 1808, among the Jews at Frankfort, 4:7-1 per cent were under 20 years of age, but of the Jews at Hamburg in 1925 only 23-8. Thus not

half, but less than one-fourth, of the Hamburg Jews were under 20 years of age. The age-groups among the Frankfort Jews in 1808 correspond approximately to those of the Polish Jews in 1921, when 46*7 per cent were under 20 years of age. The Jews in Latvia approximate to those of Central Europe. Sharpest of all is the contrast between East and West in Czechoslovakia, when the highly developed provinces of